JOHN ENGLISHMAN,

In Defence of the Engliſh Conſtitution.

Friday, April, 18, 1755. Number II.

To JOHN ENGLISHMAN,

SIR,

THE following Piece wrote ſome Time ago, now craves a Birth in your Paper; from,

Your Humble Servant, &c.

To the Intelligent of the Dutch Nation *in the Province of* New-York, *profeſſing themſelves of the* Eſtabliſhed Religion *of the* United Provinces, *or the* Belgick Church.

GENTLEMEN,

YOU can't be unacquainted, that the Affair of eſtabliſhing a College in this Province, has very much engaged the Attention of a Party, which have attained to the Diſtinction from other Sects, by the Name of *The Reflectorians*; whoſe Numbers ought to be eſtimated only, as in all other Profeſſions, by an explicit Conſent to their *Creed*, which has been publiſhed. This *Sect*, for ſome Reaſons which may be eaſily gueſſed, (different from ſuch as they have openly avowed) have uſed various Methods to raiſe a popular Diſlike to the Eſtabliſhment made by his Majeſty's Letters Patent; and thereby, if poſſible, to withdraw the Patronage of the Legiſlature, under which the firſt Projection took its Riſe, and upon which the Proſpect of a flouriſhing Seminary, to be an Ornament and Advantage to the whole Province, very much depends. I ſhall, in order to the Purpoſe of this Addreſs, only at this Time, take Notice of two Methods, whereby they ſeem to promiſe themſelves Succeſs in their Oppoſition.

1. Miſrepreſenting the Nature and Tendency of the *Charter* Eſtabliſhment, and the Intention and Deſign of thoſe who were inſtrumental in obtaining of it, as a Scheme for excluding all *Diſſenters*, from the Rights, Privileges and Advantages of the *College*.---This is plain, from the *firſt* Dialogue at the WATCH-TOWER, and refuted by the *Second*, from the expreſs Words of the Charter itſelf.

2. Endeavouring to engage the *Dutch* (who are numerous in the Province) in a Combination with the moſt numerous Sect of our *Diſſenters*, and to ſpirit up both to liſt under the *new Sect* of *Reflectorians*, for making the Oppoſition more efficacious.--- I don't doubt, but that the beſt Part of thoſe who are of the *Engliſh* Nation, and have been induced to ſign Inſtructions to the Repreſentatives, will be contented, that *they* ſhould act according to their own Reaſon and Conſcience in this important Affair, without eſteeming ſuch Subſcriptions to be the *Voice of GOD*, becauſe the Voice of People, in an Affair they couldnot *reaſonably* be thought competent Judges; at leaſt, before they were better informed in the Nature of the Diſpute:---And, that the Conſequence of their Subſcription was, to influence their Repreſentatives, to load the Province with the *Burthen* of a *ſecond* College, when one had already ſo far happily advanced, as to furniſh a Proſpect of having the Means of a *liberal Education*, offered to all Perſuaſions and Parties, without any Infringment of their juſt and legal Rights; of which every intelligent Perſon may be ſatisfied, by a Sight of the *Charter*, for this Purpoſe publiſhed.-*--Of the *Dutch*, we more eaſily flatter ourſelves, that they will never be induced to join in an unreaſonable Oppoſition, to Meaſures that are according to the Conſtitution of the *Engliſh* Nation, by which themſelves are deprived of no one Privilege or Advantage, which the Members adhering to *one* National Conſtitution, can expect or deſire from *another*, with which the greateſt Friendſhip ſubſiſts.--- I have addreſſed this Paper to you, *Gentlemen*, as you will be beſt able to correct my Miſtakes, if any ſhou'd occur, in the Anſwer I intend here, to a Paragraph in *Watch-Tower*, Numb. V. The *Fact* that has been frequently and confidently aſſerted (he ſays) of the *Affinity* between the *Dutch* and *Engliſh* Churches; the Falſity of it, he hopes, none remain ſtill to be convinced of: So that, if he ſhould convince any Body, by his Quotation from a Book in the Library, it muſt be beyond his own Hope, and beyond my Expectation too. I have not Room to recite his Paragragh, therefore beg Leave to refer to his Numb. V.

The pretended *Affinity*, the Falſity of whoſe Pretence, he thinks now ſo fully underſtood; he, however, wou'd convince over again, that it has no Exiſtence; by, firſt referring to thoſe that know more of the Matter than he can pretend to, ſuppoſing they can ſee a great *Diſparity* between the two Churches, " in the *grand Principles of Chriſtianity*, " inculcated by their reſpective Clergy." You, *Gentlemen*, can tell, whether your Clergy inculcate any Principles of Chriſtianity, that may not be ſaid to have Affinity with ſuch as are inculcated by our Clergy, agreeable to the 39 Articles of our Church:--- The Trinity in Unity, Incarnation, Paſſion, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion of our *Bleſſed Saviour*, the Deſcent of the *Holy Ghoſt* the *Comforter*; among whoſe Gifts are to be reckoned various Orders in the Miniſtry of the *Chriſtian* Church, &c. So much may ſuffice for his *Innuendo*, that there can be no *Affinity* where ſo great Diſparity in Doctrine.---- But his fine Quotation, ' That *Engliſh Preſbyterians* are moſt numerous in *Holland*, and moſt favoured by the Government; and that the *Dutch* Church, or Eſtabliſhment of the *United Provinces*, is not *Epiſcopal*,' we may allow to be juſt, and yet aſſert the *Affinity* between the *Engliſh* and *Dutch* Church, to be a ſufficient Motive to the Members of the *Dutch Communion*, not to take Part in the unreaſonable Quarrels of any Sort of *Diſſenters* from the Church of *England*, to prejudice our Eſtabliſhed Church; which can't be done by them, but upon Principles that are as oppoſite to the Eſtabliſhment of the *United Provinces*, as they are to the *Church of England*, whoſe Eſtabliſhment extends to this Province, as well as the Toleration; by which all *Diſſenters* have Security for the free Enjoyment of their ſeveral Perſuaſions and Immunities granted them thereby.

Identity of Names, is no Argument to prove *Identity* of Things: The Name *Preſbyterian*, has been transferred, from Party to Party, among our *Diſſenters*, of very different Principles and Practices; and rather at this Day, ſignifies *negatively*, not Epiſcopal, than any Thing *poſitive*: And

* And ſold at the *New-Printing-Office* in *Beaver-Street*.

in ſuch a large Senſe, I will not contend, that the Word may not alſo be applied to the *Dutch* Church, and yet leave Room to aſſert a great *Affinity* between the *Epiſcopal Engliſh* and *Preſbyterian Dutch* Churches; and very great and eſſential Diſſimilitude between the *Dutch*, and thoſe that call themſelves *Preſbyterians* in this Province:---And between our *Preſbyterian Diſſenters*, and the *Engliſh eſtabliſhed Preſbyterians* in the *United Provinces*; where, by conforming to the National Eſtabliſhment, as fully as the Native *Dutch*, they enjoy the ſame Privileges and Advantages as the Native Inhabitants. And the ſame would be done in *England* for People of any Nation. Which, therefore, is neither Matter of Boaſt, Wonder or Argument.

I have in my own *Library*, a Book printed at *Rotterdam*, by *Iſaac Van Waeſberghe*, *Anno*, 1636, *The Apologetical Reply of the Rev.* JOHN DEVENPORT, *B. D.* This Gentleman reſigned his Pariſh Church in *England*, upon ſome Scruples about Conformity; and for his great Fame, was invited to *Amſterdam*, to be Collegue with Mr. *Paget*, in an *Engliſh* Church, upon the *Dutch* Eſtabliſhment there; whoſe Scruples about Conformity to the *Dutch* Eſtabliſhment, procured his Rejection; in which the Magiſtrates exerted their Authority as well as the Claſſis. From the particular Accounts of the ſeveral Steps and Proceedings in this Affair, and relating to the Rejection of the famous Mr. HOOKER, and others; I come to underſtand ſomething of the *Dutch* Conſtitution; and am able to relate, upon good Authority, ſundry Things, from whence thoſe who pleaſe, may ſee the Affinity between the *Dutch* Church and eſtabliſhed *Engliſh*; and alſo, the very great *Diſſimilitude* between them, and ſuch Congregations as have no Right to take the Name Church, among Independent States, tho' they call themſelves *Preſbyterians*.

1. Then, it appears that no Man is admitted a Miniſter of the *Engliſh Preſbyterian* Church at *Amſterdam*, without the Authority of the Claſſis: And Mr. *Devenport* complains, that this Approbation was required for his Preaching there, *en paſſent*, at the Deſire of the *Conſiſtory*, p. 223.

2. That the Claſſis which is formed by Deputation from ſeveral Conſiſtories, ſuperintend the eccleſiaſtical Affairs of a Dioceſe, reſpecting Ordination and Government, in Subordination however, to Synods Provincial and National, to whoſe Deciſions the Magiſtrates enforce Obedience.

3. To the Admiſſion of Miniſters over their Pariſh Churches; Subſcriptions are required to eſtabliſhed Articles of Doctrine and Diſcipline: "To the Catechiſm, and to the "*Belgick* Confeſſion of Faith, and to the Determination "of the Synod of *Dort*, *&c.* p. 69.

4. They have an eſtabliſhed Liturgy, according to which the Sacraments are adminiſtred, *&c.*

5. That the Form of a Miniſter's Calling to one of thoſe Churches, was, "To miniſter the Word, and the Depen- "dencies thereof, according to the Order of thoſe reformed "Churches; and eſpecially, with thoſe that are combined "with the Claſſis of *Amſterdam*." p. 175.

6. I obſerve Mr. *Devenport*'s Complaint, (I think without Reaſon) p. 194. that he was "deny'd that Liberty in "*Holland*, which the *Dutch* Churches have in *England*, by "a Grant of EDWARD VI. to *Johannes a Laſco*, under "the Broad Seal of *England*, which is continued to this "Day."

7. In his Vindication of Mr. *Hooker*, renowned among the *Engliſh Diſſenters*, who was rejected in *Holland*, for his Opinions tending to Schiſm, *viz.* as is ſaid p. 246. "*The* "*two firſt concern the Browniſts*: As, *firſt*, His Opinion, "that *they* might lawfully be received for Members of that "Church. *Second*, That in ſome Caſes, the Members of "*this Church* might hear at *their* Aſſemblies."

The chief Objection againſt the *Browniſts*, as appears by the Exculpation, was their making a Separation from the Church of *England*; from whence we may conclude, what Communion they would, at that Time, have held with ſuch as our preſent *Diſſenters*. Upon the Whole, it appears that the *Dutch*, as the *Engliſh* Church, holds the Authority of the Church, to decree Rites, *&c.* which our *Diſſenters* deny; and the Right of the Magiſtrate to interpoſe in eccleſiaſtical Affairs: The Authority of National Synods, and Obedience due to the eſtabliſhed Rules and Orders of National Churches, not repugnant to the Word of GOD From theſe, and many other Conſiderations, an Anſwer is obvious to all that has been ſaid, to render you, *Gentlemen* of the *Dutch* Church, diſpoſed to favour any Attempt relating to the College, in Oppoſition to the preſent Eſtabliſhment by Charter:---In which the *Dutch*, and even our own *Diſſenters*, are admitted to a Share of the Government, and equal Privileges of Education, and all Dignities and Immunities, with a Reſerve only of the Preſidentſhip to our National Form of Religion, and Prayers to be collected from our own Liturgy, in a Manner to be approved by the Governors. As the Word *Preſbyterians*, is uſed among us, to diſtinguiſh thoſe who call their Miniſters *Preſbyters*, and have no ſuperior Order, from ſuch as have an Order ſuperior, called *Biſhops*, I can allow, that thoſe of the *Dutch* eſtabliſhed Religion, may be called *Preſbyterians*; and that many *Engliſh* Congregations, by conforming to their Eſtabliſhment, enjoy the Favours of the State, as much as if they were *Dutch*, being combined under the ſame Claſſis; which in each Dioceſe, performs the ſame Functions, which in *England* are appropriated to the Biſhop: And that thoſe who are of the National Church of *England*, have not the ſame Privileges with thoſe who conform to the Eſtabliſhment there; I ſee no Reaſon to grudge or complain, any more than for the *Dutch* to be diſſatisfied with a like Diſcrimination here; which I hope they are ſenſible, with Gratitude, is not extended to the ſame Length as in the *United Provinces*, where none are admitted into any Office or Poſt in the Government, but thoſe of their eſtabliſhed Religion.

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your Humble Servt.

&c.

JOHN ENGLISHMAN *returns Thanks to the Author of the* Watch-Tower, *for the Honour he intends to do to his laſt Performance; and begs Leave to aſſure him, that he will not be behind Hand with him in Point of Civility; and hopes that at all Times, he ſhall have Reſolution enough to publiſh the Truth, even without the Aſſiſtance of a* Conclave of Eight Reverend Clergymen; *Mr.* Watch-Tower *being in that, as in moſt other* Things, *under a grand Miſtake.*

THE Public may expect a Paper of this Length, as often as ſhall be thought needful: And the Author will gratefully acknowledge the Correſpondence of ſuch Gentlemen, as ſhall be diſpoſed to write any Thing in Defence of the College, and the Engliſh Conſtitution; who may direct to John Engliſhman, *to be left with the Printers hereof.*

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